

CORK IN TOP GEAR WITH ROLL OUT OF ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Cork City Council is taking the lead nationally by rolling out up to 76 electric vehicles (EVs), thereby creating the biggest local authority EV fleet in the country, which will result in substantial savings of up to €700,000 over five years for the council.

The fact that electric vehicles help to improve air quality, produce less than half the carbon emissions of petrol cars and will make the city's communities healthier and better places to live was key in Cork City Council's decision to replace diesel vehicles with the roll out of its electric fleet.

It is also a major plank of the City's Climate Action Plan, which followed widespread public engagement last year, and is also central to the Government's National Climate Action Plan. Cork City Council consulted with the SEAI in developing this project.

The Renault Kangoo, Nissan Leaf and Hyundai Kona will be driven by the Council's Operations staff in the delivery of road maintenance, housing maintenance, parks management and waste management services, while two of the cars will be used as 'pooled vehicles' for use by City Hall-based officials who need to use a car during the working day.

New fast charging points have been installed at City Hall and at Cork City Council depots for the electric fleet, with the support of Bord Gais Energy. Another 30 plus charging points are available to the public around the city through various providers.

Cork City Council Chief Executive Ann Doherty said: "An overarching goal of our new corporate plan for 2020-2025 is to drive Cork's future growth sustainably by leading on climate action. Road transport is a major cause of air pollution and climate change and yet nearly three quarters of Cork people commute using cars."

METROPOLITAN TRANSPORT STRATEGY

As part of the €3.5 billion Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy (CMATS), she added



Pictured at the roll out of Cork City Council's new fleet of electric vehicles in early June were (l-r): Chief Executive Ann Doherty, Lord Mayor Cllr John Sheehan, Fergus Gleeson, Senior Engineer, David Joyce, Director of Operations, and Cormac O'Sullivan, Senior Executive Engineer, at the launch of Cork City Council's new fleet of electric vehicles.

that "we want to work with our partners to support a modal shift to more sustainable means of transport and to help people think of alternatives before they automatically reach for the car keys when going to work, taking children to school, popping out to the shop or socialising by day or night".

According to former Lord Mayor of Cork, Cllr John Sheehan, "Cork City is projected to double in size over the next 20 years becoming the fastest growing city in the country. Cork will only be able to absorb this population increase yet retain our quality of life if more of us move over to sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling, opt for public transport or if we can, consider electric vehicle options if we are

changing our car."

Cork City Council's Senior Engineer Fergus Gleeson, who is the project lead, said that the council is leading the charge for other local, private and public-sector organisations to follow, "by giving its own employees the opportunity to drive electric vehicles and by demonstrating the benefits of electric cars and particularly the cost efficiencies which really are substantial for the local authority sector.

"We have done this because it is the most cost effective solution for our fleet, is technically viable, supports national policy and in a city impacted by climate change is the right and proper thing to do."